

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, definition of terms used, research objectives, research questions, scope as well as the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

Everybody knows that language is the most important thing in human life. Inocchiaro (in Alwasilah, 1992:2) argues that, language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols which permits all people in a given culture, or other people who have learned the system of that culture, to communicate or to interact". Another definition has been given by Wardaugh (1977:3) that "language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication". Shortly, the main function of language is for communication and interaction among people.

Talking about communication, there is a process of transferring message from the speaker to the hearer to fulfill their needs. As Alwasilah (1993:16) says, "Language has simple component in sending message, the message will be sent if there are three factors: the native speaker, reader or listener and the object". The communication gives the big effect for the relationship among people and language itself. People who come from different background fulfill their needs by interaction, gradually go through language contact, and finally create the new language or mix one language to another.

This phenomenon is called language variation. It consists of interference, integration, code switching, and code mixing.

English is the language “on which the sun never sets” (Crystal, 2004: 10 as cited in Buripakdi, 2008: 15). It was defined as the language of “international communication and understanding, economic development, and national unity” (Phillipson, 2000: 99). The British Council (1995) stated that English was set to be the global language for economic, social, and personal development. The notion of globalization has created new and hybrid forms of culture, language, and political organizations (Graddol, 1997) which has led to the spread of English as a medium of global transaction and the status of being a universal language. It has been used successfully across the world and has spread into the international network of production and marketing. English has travelled right through the media and entertainment world. Moreover, internet communication allows anyone to look for information available [in English] such as in online journals, discussion forums, and websites (Canagarajah, 2006).

English is no longer the importation of colonization in much of Asia, but it is the language of education, culture, business and a tool of regional cooperation as a whole (Honna, 2005). In Thailand, English has been integrated into Thai society since contact with the British during the reigns of King Rama IV and V. Nowadays English has gained acceptance and is widely used among ordinary people as well as taken an important role in various aspects. In other words, people at every level of Thai society use English for one reason or another (Masavisut et al., 1986 as cited in Buripakdi,

2008). According to Huebner (2006), English is the language of specialized knowledge and a symbol of modernity. Many Thai people believe that knowing English can help people gain more opportunities, academic achievements and social and economic benefits, which has led to English becoming an influential factor in everyday lives. For example, English is taught as a compulsory subject in Thailand's national curriculum from fundamental education to university levels. There are a great number of English training institutes providing various English courses to both children and adults. As well, English can be heard and seen widely on various Thai media.

Most Thai people use English to communicate with other countries. Given English's popularity and significant status in Thailand contact between English and Thai is unavoidable bringing about the phenomenon of language mixing (Yiamkamnuan, 2010). Since English has blended into Thai daily interactions, Thai people tend to use more English words in Thai contexts. Prasithrathsint (1997) stated that most people in Thai society are multilingual. They can understand and speak many languages and switch or mix them causing one language to influence the others. This phenomenon is called "language contact", which consequently involves notarization of English, in other words, the adaptation of English in certain social and cultural settings bringing about varieties of English (Kachru and Nelson, 2006). Many Thai people believe that those who are knowledgeable and mix English words when talking about technology are popular (Jaihuek et al., 2011). The mixing of English can be seen often via print advertisements, music lyrics, and TV programs (Chantarothai, 2011).

There have been many contributions to the study of English code-mixing in the Thai media. For example, there are studies on code-mixing in newspapers (Samingkaew, 2002; Radcharak, n.d.), in television programs (Jaihuek et al., 2011; Preechaamornkul, 2005; Kannaovakun and Gunther, 2003), and in magazines (Saiharn, 2010) which found nativized features of mixing English in the Thai language such as truncation, hybridization, semantic shift, and reduplication. However, these studies focused on some characteristics of code-mixing in the mass media and entertainment programs, whereas similar studies on TV series or code-mixing in alternative media are limited. This gap paves the way for further investigation.

To fill the gap, this study aimed to explore characteristics of Thai-English code-mixing employed in a TV show called *Hormones the Series* as a unique sample of a Thai teenage TV series. Moreover, the study also discussed to what extent Thai English code-mixing reflects the importance and power of the English language for media and Thai teenagers. Data was collected from *Hormones the Series*, in which all dialogues in its 13 episodes broadcasted on alternative media were examined for nativized features and intrasentential code-mixing. The findings revealed similar results to some previous studies (e.g., Kannaovakun and Gunther, 2003; Samingkaew, 2002) that both code-mixing words with nativized features and intrasentential code mixing words were found in the media. This study is of benefit and contributes to those in the communication field to observe the use of code-mixing in TV targeted at teenagers and to explore the use of code-mixing in alternative media as taking a

significant role. Moreover, the study enhances greater comprehension of the Thai English code-mixing phenomenon involved in daily life and reflects the importance and the power of English as the language of modernity and globalization emerging in science and technology, commerce, and media.

1.2 Definition of Terms

The following are specific key terms used in this study.

Thai-English code-mixing or **code-mixing** refers to English words used in Thai as the major language of conversation, which were found in *Hormones the Series*.

Nativized features refer to the integration of English words into Thai which causes an effect on English used in Thai as a localized context.

Intrasentential code-mixing refers to code-mixing as switching between two or more languages at an intra-sentential level or within an utterance.

Alternative media refers to non-mainstream and digital media defined by Littlejohn and Foss (2009).

The series refers to *Hormones the Series* as a unique sampling in this study. Broadcasted in 2013, the series revolves around a group of grade 10 and 11 students, featuring the issues and experiences of Thai teenagers in high school such as relationships, friends, dreams, popularity, sexuality, school gang violence and substance abuse.

1.3 Objectives of Study

By investigating nativized features and intrasentential code-mixing, this study aimed to explore characteristics of Thai-English code-mixing employed in *Hormones the Series* as a unique sampling of a Thai teenage TV series, and to discuss to what extent Thai-English code-mixing reflects the importance and power of the English language for media and Thai teenagers.

1.4 Research Questions

This study was conducted on the basis of the following research questions:

- 1) What are the characteristics of Thai-English code-mixing in *Hormones the Series*?
- 2) To what extent does the Thai-English code-mixing reflect the importance and power of the English language for media and Thai teenagers?

1.5 Scope of Study

The study is a qualitative research conducted from February to June 2014. It was focused on exploring Thai-English code-mixing in Thai teenage TV series. *Hormones the Series* was selected as a unique sampling in this study as it has been recognized as a phenomenon in Thai television with its remarkable success in terms of gaining profits and becoming the talk of the town. These were drawn from many supporting factors such as its influential storyline and characters, the well-known production company, and the use of alternative media for broadcasting and promoting the series.

The series has 15 episodes comprising of 13 main stories and two special episodes (interview and behind the scenes). Only 13 main episodes were investigated for code-mixing, in which all dialogues between characters and a character with him/herself were examined in this study. However, proper names such as names of musical bands, organizations, entertainment TV programs, and school subjects as well as the names of all episodes (named after hormones) were not considered to be code-mixing in this study. Likewise, duplicate words in the same category were not counted and the study did not explore each word's frequency or occurrence.

1.6 Significance of Study

This study can possibly enhance greater comprehension of the Thai-English Code-mixing phenomenon which has involved in daily life. It reflects the importance and the power of English as the language of modernity and globalization emerging in science and technology, commerce, and the media. In addition, it could be beneficial and contribute in two aspects: to those in the communication field in terms of observing the use of code-mixing in teenage targeted TV, coming with the natural dialogues used in real conversation and to an observation of the use of code-mixing in alternative media taking a significant role nowadays.

In terms of academic development, Thai-English code-mixing in *Hormones the Series* uncovers some evidence related to previous studies revealing the findings of code-mixing in various media such as TV programs, radio shows, and newspapers. It could be considered a pioneer for further research in the investigation of attitudes and

sociological and cultural viewpoints behind the use of code-mixing, which would benefit the growth of research in this field.

1.7 Organization of Writing

In writing this paper, the researcher make it in five chapters, there are:

The first chapter is an introduction will explain about the background of problem and the reason why it is chosen as the topic of research. This chapter also consists of problem statements, purpose of study, and organization of writing. Chapter II is literature review bases of Code Mixing, this chapter contains literature that used as reference of the writer about the Code Mixing found in *Hormones the Series*. Chapter III is methodology of research in this chapter, it will be explained about method and technique that used by the researcher to reach and evaluate the source. The researcher will describe the steps of the research which will be doing by me. Chapter IV is findings, this chapter is explanation as analysis product of the data. The explanation is based on the problem statements and theories. Chapter V is discussion and conclusion, this chapter is the answer of the writer's analysis of the problem. This final chapter is the researcher's view about the main of the research explanation.